



Park Street Church of England (VA) Primary School
Lower Park Street, Cambridge CB5 8AR
Tel: 01223 576922
Email: office@parkstreet.cambs.sch.uk
www.parkstreet.cambs.sch.uk



Pupil Voice Policy

Author: Sarah Hawker (Headteacher)
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1. Rationale

We believe that children need to be active participants in their own education and to feel that their opinions will be heard in the wider school community.

At Park Street CofE Primary School, we therefore seek ways to listen to the views of our pupils and involve them in decision making so that they are engaged as partners in the life of the school. We believe that this will make a positive contribution to the school environment and ethos.

2. Student voice and pupil participation activities at Park Street C of E Primary School

There is a wide range of approaches that we are developing at Park Street C of E Primary School to support pupil participation and promote student voice:

- School Council forums
- Playground Leaders and Peer Mentors - peer to peer support
- Fundraising campaigns (both teacher and pupil initiated)
- Consultations on teacher/school led projects e.g. re: drafting policies relating to behaviour or anti-bullying; evaluation of learning activities/the curriculum/Collective Worship
- Leading Collective Worship
- Assessment for Learning – self and peer assessment on lesson headers
- Pupil conferencing – half-termly meeting with teachers 1:1
- Learning Review meetings – children lead their parents' evenings by giving their views and outlining their strengths and areas for development
- Visible Learning – children develop 'good learning dispositions' to be able to discuss their development as learners
- Pupils with additional learning needs are involved in decisions that affect their learning and well-being through their Pupil Support Plans. Pupils are also consulted when they have Annual Reviews.
- Pupil questionnaires
- Worry and suggestion boxes

Pupils are informed of the outcome of their involvement.

3. Curriculum

We also believe in embedding pupil voice into the curriculum, with teaching and learning activities being used to enable pupils to be curious and motivated, and to make informed decisions about their lives, their health and wellbeing, and the environment. Children are consulted about their own areas of interest and enquiry; these are taken into account in the teacher's planning.

4. School Council

One of the principal means by which pupil voice activity is progressed in school is by the use of the School Council. We believe that our school council will enhance and influence positive peer leadership and mutual responsibility throughout the school.

School Council will

- Be a positive forum
- Provide an opportunity for all children to be heard
- Provide a forum for the leadership of the school to listen to children's knowledge and opinions
- Aid communication throughout the school
- Build the children's confidence and self-esteem
- Encourage the children to be active citizens with courageous advocacy
- Provide the children with a democratic model

School Council will also be used to assist the school with its self-evaluation procedures and enable us to be more accountable to the whole school community.

School Council in Practice

School Council organise the recruitment of their own members, using a voting system that involves all pupils of the school, ensuring representation of all year groups. Every class elects at least two School Council Representatives. The election is anonymous. School Council membership will consist of a member of staff, who will generally chair the meeting, the School Council Representatives, and a School Governor Representative.

Every class holds a class council on a monthly basis. This is an opportunity for School Council Representatives to discuss the School Council agenda, and to gather feedback. School Council meetings take place periodically throughout the school year.

At each meeting, those present and absent are noted, and apologies read out. Matters arising from the previous meeting are discussed, followed by business for the meeting in accordance with the agenda.

At some meetings a guest speaker will be invited. This may be another member of staff, or an outside speaker.

Minutes are recorded and circulated to staff and school council representatives to share with their peers.

School Council organise their own activities and liaise to accommodate these activities on the school calendar. Members of the School Council take part in staff recruitment, forming an interview panel.

Student feedback is also gathered, following sample lessons. The School Council generates funds and manages how these funds are used. Members of the School Council may also represent the school at community meetings and at meetings of the Leadership Team and Governing Body where appropriate.

5. Involving pupils in their own learning

Pupil participation in their own learning means a range of different things in the classroom. It includes developing projects to reflect interests and needs as expressed by pupils; encouraging pupils' reflection on their own and others' learning; reflection by pupils on the style and content of lessons and opportunities to give feedback to teachers.

Assessment for Learning encourages a view of assessment as an essential part of everyday classroom practice involving teachers and learners in reflection, dialogue, decision-making and target setting (see Assessment for Learning Policy).

6. Benefits of pupil involvement

There is a range of benefits in greater participation. For pupils these include increased self-confidence and feelings of empowerment, and a greater sense of responsibility.

Behaviour has the potential to improve with pupils taking greater responsibility for their own behaviour, as well as improved learning.

We believe that there is a positive impact of pupil participation on their own work and the school environment.

Children's insight into the ways they learn best and the ideas that they have for lesson content and style as well as their ideas on the life of the school should be welcomed. Pupils' learning will improve when their views are taken into consideration. This can only have a positive impact on raising standards.

7. Developing a whole school approach

To encourage a consistent, positive attitude to pupil participation at Park Street CofE Primary School, the whole staff, including the non-teaching staff, should understand the benefits of pupil participation, be clear in their role in terms of supporting pupil participation and be kept well informed about issues being discussed and proposals put forward by the school council and other pupil representative groups.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

Pupil participation and pupil voice are monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher in line with other existing procedures for curriculum development.